

FRONT & CENTER

Providing News to Our Veterans

February 2012



AM I A VETERAN?

Jared Herstine served in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard for six years, including a year-long tour in Iraq. However, after leaving the service in 2007 he struggled with unemployment, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He did not immediately seek help at VA; instead, he questioned himself – *Am I even a Veteran?*

“I’m a young Veteran and I felt really awkward coming to the VA at first because I wasn’t sure

if I was a Veteran,” said Jared. “I questioned myself for the longest time.”

Have you recently returned from military service? **You ARE a Veteran.** A Veteran is defined by federal law, moral code and military service as any person who served for any length of time in any military service branch. VA Butler’s Operation New Dawn (OND), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Team is here to welcome you home and welcome you to the VA.

After Jared realized he was a Veteran, and needed some help, he came to VA Butler Healthcare. “I’m sure glad I did. The VA is like a second family,” said Jared. “I don’t know where I’d be without the VA today; I’d probably be on the streets.”

Jared participates in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the VA’s Supported Housing (HUD-VASH) Program. The program works to maintain permanent housing in the local community for eligible homeless Veterans and their families. Veterans who are homeless or at-risk for homelessness may contact VA Butler’s Homeless Program Coordinator at 800.362.8262, ext. 2439 or call the National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 877.424.3838.

Jared is also currently undergoing treatment for PTSD and depression. VA Butler provides consultation, evaluation, and treatment for a variety of behavioral health issues. For more information, Veterans may call 800.362.8262, ext. 5039. Jared’s advice to other returning service members: “There is help available. Don’t be afraid to ask!” ★

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THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...FEBRUARY

- 3 The first paper money in America is issued by the colony of Massachusetts [The currency was used to pay soldiers fighting a war against Quebec] (1690)
- 9 The first U.S. combat troops are sent to South Vietnam (1965)
- 11 Pennsylvania Hospital opens in Philadelphia, PA – the first hospital in the United States (1752)
- 13 The U.S. Marine Corps Women’s Reserve is established (1943)
- 22 Calvin Coolidge becomes the first U.S. president to deliver a radio broadcast from the White House [just think, now our President tweets from the White House!] (1924)
- 23 Desert Storm Ground War begins (1991)



NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY IS FEBRUARY 3

Did you know heart disease kills approximately one woman every minute?

Join VA Butler Healthcare by wearing red on February 3 to help raise awareness about heart disease in women.



FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Hearth disease is the number one cause of death in the United States. The most common heart disease in the U.S. is coronary heart disease, which often appears as a heart attack. Knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack is crucial.

Signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- **Chest discomfort.** Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- **Shortness of breath.** May occur with or without chest discomfort.
- **Other signs.** These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

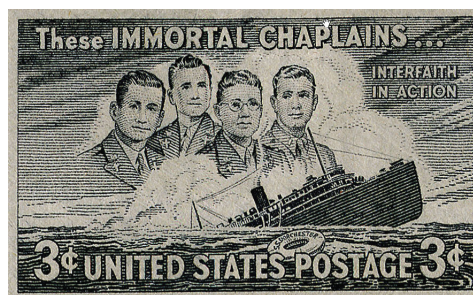
A healthy diet and lifestyle are the best weapons you have to fight heart disease. Read nutrition labels as you make food choices, make physical activity a part of your daily schedule, and quit smoking. Talk to your health care team at VA Butler for more information or visit www.prevention.va.gov. ★

We want to hear from you!
Email amanda.wilczynski@va.gov
or lauren.heiger@va.gov to share
your story with us!

PASTORAL CARE

On Feb. 3, 1943, the U.S. Army Transport Dorchester was crossing the North Atlantic transporting more than 900 troops when a German U-boat fired a torpedo that instantly killed 100 men and knocked

out power and radio communication with Dorchester's three escort ships. As soldiers rushed to lifeboats, four chaplains of different faiths, Reverend George Fox (Methodist), Jewish Rabbi Alexander Goode, Reverend Clark Poling (Dutch Reformed) and Father John Washington (Roman Catholic) comforted the wounded and directed others to safety. The four chaplains remained on the ship's slanted aft deck, standing together, arms linked, heads bowed in prayer, as the Dorchester slipped beneath the waves. In 1948, Congress declared Feb. 3 to be Four Chaplains Day.



Did you know VA Butler Healthcare has three chaplains in its Pastoral Care Department? VA Butler's Chaplains bring emotional and spiritual support and comfort to all areas of the facility. They are here to help Veterans discover or strengthen their spiritual identity on their journey through a medical, physical, or mental crisis. For more information call 724.477.5009 or visit www.va.gov/chaplain. ★

NATIONAL SALUTE TO VETERAN PATIENTS WEEK

We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give."

Winston Churchill

Every year, we celebrate Valentine's Day with candy, cards, and flowers. At VA, we celebrate the week of Valentine's Day (Feb. 12-18) as National Salute to Veteran Patients Week. During

this week, VA medical facilities across America honor the men and women who have given so much to protect and preserve all we hold dear as Americans and provide an opportunity for the public to join in the recognition.

This year, we have a variety of events, visitors, and entertainment planned for our Veteran residents. For information about the National Salute Program or volunteer opportunities at VA Butler, call 724.285.2575. ★

EVENTS

2 **February Podcast • PACT**
Thursday, Feb. 2 • 12-12:30 pm
Chat link: talkshoe.com/tc/85029
or Call in: 724.444.7444 (Call ID: 85029)

3 **National Wear Red Day**
Friday, Feb. 3 • 11:30 am-1:15 pm
VA Butler Healthcare Auditorium

12-18 **National Salute to Veteran Patients Week**
Feb. 12-Feb. 18
VA Butler Healthcare (and nationwide)



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